

CLAIMS

What I claim as my invention is:

1. A method for illuminating the playing surface in the vicinity of a preexisting and preinstalled croquet wicket for playing the game of croquet under conditions of low ambient illumination by means of an electric lighting unit that can be universally attached to all existing types of croquet wickets, and comprising methods for:
 - (a) aggregating and mounting related electrical and mechanical components on a mounting plate in such a way as to compactly form an integrated unit that can be conveniently attached to said wicket;
 - (b) supplying power from batteries to one or a plurality of electric light emitters;
 - (c) switching on and off said power;
 - (d) positioning said electric light emitters within said mounting plate so as to directly illuminate the croquet playing surface around said wicket;
 - (e) providing both a focused and a diffuse cone of illumination beneath said wicket;

(f) attaching said unit to said wicket in a universal fashion, such that all conventional said wickets used in croquet are accommodated; and

(g) preventing said unit, attached to said wicket, from slipping with respect to said wicket;

all, whereby playing the game of croquet can be facilitated under conditions of low illumination by attaching said wicket electric lighting unit to a preexisting conventional croquet wicket already positioned and installed on the croquet playing course.

2. An article of manufacture for illuminating the playing surface in the vicinity of a preexisting croquet wicket for the purpose of playing the game of croquet under conditions of low ambient illumination, comprising:

(a) a first means for aggregating and organizing components required to provide illumination around said wicket, said first means comprising a mounting plate;

(b) one or a plurality of electric light emitters attached to said mounting plate, said electric light emitters positioned so as to illuminate the playing surface around said wicket;

(c) an electric power supply attached to said mounting plate;

- (d) an electric circuit attached to said mounting plate, comprising said electric light emitters, batteries contained within said electric power supply, and a second means of opening and closing electrical continuity of said circuit, said second means comprising an electric switch;
- (e) a third means for attaching said mounting plate to said wicket, said third means comprising one or a plurality of retaining straps.

3. An article of manufacture of claim 2, wherein:

said retaining straps are made of hook-and-loop fastener material.

4. An article of manufacture of claim 2, wherein:

said retaining straps are made of double sided hook-and-loop fastener material, said retaining straps having hooks on one side and loops on the other side.

5. An article of manufacture of claim 2, wherein:

- (a) said mounting plate is of a generally narrow rectangular oblong shape of predetermined width and thickness, said mounting plate being made of solid light transmissible material;

(b) a fourth means is provided for said mounting plate to straddle said wicket and said wicket to straddle said mounting plate thereby mutually engaging one another, said fourth means comprising an open engaging slot at each end of said mounting plate, said engaging slot being of predetermined width and length sufficient to allow said engaging slot to straddle said wicket;

(c) a fifth means is provided for preventing inadvertent relative motion between said mounting plate and said wicket, said fifth means comprising one or a plurality of friction pads attached to said electric lighting unit such that said friction pads are interposed between said mounting plate and said wicket so that said friction pads are maintained in a state of compression against said wicket by action of said retaining straps.

6. An article of manufacture of claim 2, wherein:

(a) said electric light emitters are light emitting diodes;

(b) a sixth means is provided to direct the illumination from said light emitting diodes directly upon the area under said wicket, said sixth means comprising one or a plurality of holes of predetermined diameter positioned on said mounting plate, and said light emitting diodes mounted in said holes, such that said light emitting diodes directly radiate light onto the croquet playing surface immediately under and around said wicket.

7. An article of manufacture of claim 2, wherein:

- (a) said electric power supply is comprised of batteries and a battery holder, said battery holder containing one or a plurality of batteries selected from the group consisting of conventional AA, AAA, and B cell batteries;
- (b) said switch is internally mounted in said battery holder, said switch having a switch knob that is accessible externally to said battery holder;
- (c) said battery holder is attached to said mounting plate such that a separation space for containing components is created between said battery holder and said mounting plate, said separation space being created by a combination of standoff spacers of predetermined width and thickness, and component channels of predetermined width and depth.

8. An article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein:

- (a) said battery holder has a battery cover, and said switch knob is located on the side of said battery holder opposite to the side of said battery holder containing said battery cover, and said battery holder is attached to said mounting plate such that said switch knob lay hidden within said separation space between said battery holder and said mounting plate;

(b) a seventh means is provided for moving said switch knob between an on or off position, said seventh means comprising, a slide actuator, said slide actuator having two legs, said two legs forming two geometrical planes meeting at a right angle to form an L shaped cross section, and said two legs being a hole leg and a solid leg, and through said plane of said hole leg there being a switch hole of predetermined diameter and location such that said switch hole will fit over and engage said switch knob when said legs of said slide actuator are juxtaposed respectively against adjacent sides of said battery holder, said hole leg thus being slidably interposed into said separation space between said battery holder and said mounting plate, said solid leg remaining exposed and thereby accessible to a user for sliding said switch knob to an on or off position.

9. An article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein:

said battery holder has a battery cover, and said switch knob is located on the same side of said battery holder as said battery cover, and said battery holder is attached to said mounting plate such that said battery cover is accessible to the user.

10. An article of manufacture of claim 7, wherein:

said battery holder has a battery cover, and said switch knob is located on a side of said battery holder that is adjacent to the side of said battery holder containing said battery cover, and said battery holder is

attached to said mounting plate such that said battery cover is accessible to the user;

all, whereby playing the game of croquet can be facilitated under conditions of low illumination by attaching said wicket electric lighting devices to preexisting conventional croquet wickets already positioned and installed on the croquet playing course.